

REMARKS

This amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed September 20, 2002. This application was originally filed with 19 claims. The status of the claims is as follows: Claims 1-19 stand rejected. Per this amendment, claims 1-4, claims 6-10 and claims 12-19 have been amended; and claims 20-44 have been added. No claims have been cancelled.

The Examiner objected to Figure 2B as not containing a "Prior Art" legend. In respond, a Proposed Drawing Correction is concurrently submitted herewith. The proposed amendment seeks to add a "Prior Art" legend to Figure 2B.

The Examiner objected to the Drawings because they include the reference number "420" which is not mentioned in the specification. In response, the specification has been amended at page 7, line 16, to insert the reference number 420 after the first occurrence of the word "printer." Support for this amendment is found in the Drawings and the context of the Specification which clearly indicate that that reference number "420" is a printer.

The Examiner objected to the Specification citing various informalities. In response the word "replay" has been changed to the word "reply" throughout the Specification. Furthermore, the typographical errors concerning the improper use of the reference number "28" have been changed, as appropriate to the reference number "26."

The Examiner objected to claims 1-3, 5 and 19 citing various informalities resulting from typographical errors. In response, the word "replay" as been changed to the word "reply" throughout the claims. However, the Examiner's objection with respect to claim 5 is traversed. The Examiner suggests that the phrase "a hygiened address" should be changed to "the hygiened address." It is respectfully submitted that the language of claim 5 should remain unchanged. Proper antecedent basis must be provided for the phrase "hygiened address." The first occurrence of this

phrase is on line 3 of claim 5. Therefore, the phrase "hygiended address" must be proceeded by the word "a." The use of the phrase "address hygiene" earlier in the claim does not provide antecedent basis because it is directed to an activity (a verb) and not an item (noun). On the other hand, the phrase phrase "hygiended address" is directed to a item that results from the previously mentioned activity.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. More particularly, the Examiner indicated: (i) "it is not clear whether the senders or business owners print the postage indicia"; (ii) the recitation of "the delivery address" in claim 2, lacks antecedent basis; and (iii) the recitation "the postage metering system" in claim 4 lacks antecedent basis. In response, the claims have been amended to address these concerns.

Additionally, the Examiner made comments concerning the appropriateness of the invention. However, the Examiner's comments indicating that the method is "deemed to be against the general public policy" are transversed. Nothing in 35 U.S.C. § 112 speaks to public policy. The benefits and any associated burdens that come with having a postage metering system are not proper grounds for rejection. Market influences determine whether or not consumers decide to use a postage metering system or some other form of postage. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw these comments or reformulate them as part of a 35 U.S.C. § 101 rejection.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by United States Patent Number 6,282,524, issued to Alan L. Kramer (hereinafter "Kramer '524"). This position is respectfully transversed.

It is well settled that the Examiner bears the initial burden to articulate each ground of rejection. Mere omnibus type rejections are not allowed. More particularly, the Examiner must state "the grounds of rejection fully and clearly." See MPEP

707.07(d). In this instance, the Examiner has failed to meet this requirement. In attempting to describe the grounds of rejection, the Examiner has done nothing more than reprint the claims and state that Kramer '524 discloses the same. No citations to the specification of Kramer '524 are provided. No citations to specific figures contained within Kramer '524 are provided. Nothing other than the conclusory statement of "Kramer '524 discloses" followed by a reprinting of claim 1 is provided.

Moreover, a review of Kramer '524 reveals that it fails to disclose at least the following: (i) a registration id number associated with a previously defined delivery address; (ii) transmitting the registration number to a data center; (iii) the registration id number being associated with a particular mail campaign; and (iv) generating the postage indicia information using the registration ID number.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-2, 4, 9, 15 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by United States Patent Number 6,428,219, issued to Mark A. Stier, et al. (hereinafter "Stier '219"). This position is respectfully traversed.

Here again, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has failed to meet the initial burden of stating "the grounds of rejection fully and clearly." The Examiner has barely done more than reprint the claims following a conclusory preamble that states Stier '219 discloses."

Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has misconstrued the teachings of Stier '219. The Examiner suggests that reference number 130 teaches "receiving a delivery address from a sender." In Stier '219, reference number 130 is not an mail campaign sender at all. In fact, reference number 130 is the meter vendor server. See Stier '219, column 6, lines 7 thru 11. Furthermore, Stier '219 contains no description of at least: (i) a registration id number associated with a previously defined delivery address; and (ii) transmitting the registration number to a data center; (iii) the registration id number being associated with a particular mail

campaign; and (iv) generating the postage indicia information using the registration ID number.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-4, 8, 9 and 14-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by United States Patent Number 6,121,565, issued to Gordon Llewellyn Allott, III. (hereinafter "Allott '565"). This position is respectfully traversed.

Here again, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has failed to meet the initial burden of stating "the grounds of rejection fully and clearly." The Examiner has done nothing more than reprint the claims following a conclusory preamble that states "Allott '565 discloses."

Moreover, Allott '565 contains no description of at least: (i) a registration id number associated with a previously defined delivery address; and (ii) transmitting the registration number to a data center; (iii) the registration id number being associated with a particular mail campaign; and (iv) generating the postage indicia information using the registration ID number.

The Examiner rejected Claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by any of the following: United States Patent Number 5,319,562, issued to Harry T. Whitehouse (hereinafter "Whitehouse '562"); United States Patent Number 5,324,927, issued to Robert L. Williams (hereinafter "Williams '927"); United States Patent Number 5,988,897, issued to Perry A. Pierce, et al (hereinafter "Pierce '897"); United States Patent Number 6,208,890, issued to Salim G. Kara (hereinafter "Kara '890"); United States Patent Number 4,743,747, issued to Guy Fougere, et al (hereinafter "Fougere '747"); United States Patent Number 5,520,990, issued to Ralph W. Rotermund (hereinafter "Rotermund '990"); United States Patent Number 5,207,373 issued to John F. Tighe (hereinafter "Tighe '373"); and United States Patent Number 5,642,855 issued to Irving R. Michlin (hereinafter "Michlin '855"). This position is respectfully traversed.

Here again, it is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has failed to meet the initial burden of stating "the grounds of rejection fully and clearly." The Examiner has done nothing more than reprint the claim following a conclusory preamble that states "the above cited references disclose."

Moreover, a review of the references indicates that none contain any description of at least: (i) a registration ID number printed on the business reply mail piece; and (ii) the registration ID number being associated with a mail campaign sender, a previously defined delivery address and a particular mail campaign of which the business reply mail piece is a part.

The Examiner rejected Claims 5, 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Stier '219 in view of Kramer '524. This position is respectfully traversed.

Claims 5, 10 and 11 are all dependent claims. The combination of Stier '219 in view of Kramer '524 fails to provide any motivation, suggestion or teaching of the features of independent Claims 4 and 9, from which Claims 5, 10 and 11 ultimately depend, respectively. This was pointed out in detail in the response submitted above with respect to the 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejections of independent Claims 4 and 9. Therefore, this rejection of the dependent claims fails due to the insufficiency of the rejections made with respect to the independent claims.

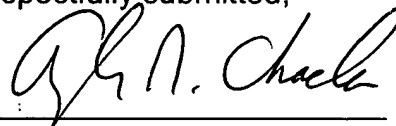
The Examiner rejected Claims 5-7 and 10-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Allott '565 in view of Kramer '524. This position is respectfully traversed.

Claims 5-7 and 10-13 are all dependent claims. The combination of Allott '565 in view of Kramer '524 fails to provide any motivation, suggestion or teaching of the features of independent Claims 4 and 9, from which Claims 5-7 and 10-13 ultimately depend, respectively. This was pointed out in detail in the response submitted above with respect to the 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejections of independent Claims 4 and 9.

Therefore, this rejection of the dependent claims fails due to the insufficiency of the rejections made with respect to the independent claims.

Based on the amendments and reasoning provided above, it is respectfully submitted that all claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of all claims and an early indication of allowance are respectfully request. If the Examiner finds reason not to allow all claims, then a telephone interview with the Attorney signed below is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

In the specification:

- On page 4, paragraph 2, line 25, delete "replay" and insert –repley--.
- On page 5, line 1, delete "replay" and insert –reply--.
- On page 10, paragraph 2, line 25, delete "As" and insert –An--.
- On page 11, paragraph 1, line 3, delete "28" and insert –26--;
- On page 11, paragraph 1, line 7, delete "28" and insert –26--;
- On page 11, paragraph 3, line 32, delete "28" and insert –26--.
- On page 12, paragraph 1, line 5, delete "28" and insert –26--,
- On page 12, paragraph 1, line 6, delete "28" and insert –26--;
- On page 12, paragraph 2 line 8, delete "r" and delete "that" and insert –then--;
- On page 12, paragraph 2, line 9, delete "28" and insert –26--;
- On page 12, paragraph 2, line 19, delete "28" and insert –26--.

In the Claims:

Please amend the Claims as follows:

1. (Amended) A method of operating a postage metering system for printing a postage indicium for use with a business reply mail piece, the method comprising the step(s) of:
transmitting a registration ID number, provided by a mail campaign sender to a user, from the postage metering system to a data center, the registration ID number being associated with a delivery address previously defined by the mail campaign sender; [particular mail campaign of which the business replay mail piece is a part;]

receiving postage indicium information at the postage metering system from the data center, the postage indicium information generated using the registration ID number and including data relating to the delivery address; and
printing the postage indicium on the business reply mail piece at the postage metering system using the postage indicium information.

2. (Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step(s) of:
printing the delivery address on the business reply mail piece at the postage metering system, where the delivery address has been selected, by the data center from a plurality of delivery addresses previously defined by the mail campaign sender, according to parameters associated with the user of the postage metering system that were previously established by the mail campaign sender.

[including within the postage indicium information relating to the delivery address.]

3. (Amended) The method of claim 2, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving a subsidy provided by the data center to the user of the postage metering system for mailing the business reply mail piece [if the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period].

4. (Amended) A method of operating a data center for generating postage indicium information for use with printing a postage indicium on a business reply mail piece, the method comprising the step(s) of:

receiving a delivery address from a mail campaign sender [of] corresponding to a mail campaign of which the business replay mail piece is a part;
generating a registration ID number corresponding to the delivery address;
providing the registration ID number to the mail campaign sender;
establishing a transaction session with [the] a postage metering system;

receiving the registration ID number from the postage metering system, where the registration ID number was previously provided by the mail campaign sender to a user of the postage metering system;

generating the postage indicium information using the registration ID number;

and

transmitting the postage indicium information to the postage metering system for use in printing the postage indicium on the business reply mail piece.

6. (Amended) The method of claim 5, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing a subsidy to the user for mailing the business reply mail piece [if the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period]; and
charging the subsidy to the mail campaign sender [of the business reply mail piece].
7. (Amended) The method of claim 6, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving an expiration date from the mail campaign sender [of the mail campaign] beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender that is associated with the registration ID number; and
providing a warning to the user if the user contacts the data center after the expiration date attempting to obtain postage for the business reply mail piece.
8. (Amended) The method of claim 4, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving an expiration date from the mail campaign sender [of the mail campaign] beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender that is associated with the registration ID number; and
providing a warning to the user if the user contacts the data center after the expiration date attempting to obtain postage for the business reply mail piece.

9. (Amended) A method of operating a business reply mail processing system by a mail campaign sender [for printing a postage indicium for use with a business reply mail piece], the method comprising the step(s) of:
- providing a delivery address, associated with a particular mail campaign which includes a business reply mail piece, to a data center;
 - receiving from the data center a registration ID number associated with the delivery address; and
 - [associating a registration ID number with a particular mail campaign of which the business replay mail piece is a part;
 - associating the registration ID number with a delivery address;]
 - supplying the registration ID number and the business reply mail piece to a user, where the registration ID number is used by the user to print a postal indicium on the business reply mail piece including data relating to the delivery address. [; and
 - using the registration ID number to generate the postage indicium for the business reply mail piece.]
10. (Amended) The method of claim 9, further comprising the step(s) of:
- [performing] receiving from the data center a new hygiened address representing a version [hygiene on] of the delivery address prior to supplying the registration ID number and the business reply mail piece to the user, where the new hygiened address is to be used as the delivery address.
12. (Amended) The method of claim 11, further comprising the step(s) of:
- authorizing the data center to provide [providing] a subsidy to the user for mailing the business reply mail piece [if the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period]; and
 - authorizing the data center to charge [charging] the subsidy to the mail campaign sender [a sender of the business reply mail piece].

13. (Amended) The method of claim 12, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing the data center with [receiving] an expiration date [from the sender of the mail campaign] beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender that is associated with the registration ID number; and
authorizing the data center to warn [providing a warning to] the user if the user contacts the data center after the expiration date attempting to obtain postage for the business reply mail piece.
14. (Amended) The method of claim 9, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing the data center with [receiving] an expiration date [from the sender of the mail campaign] beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender that is associated with the registration ID number; and
authorizing the data center to warn [providing a warning to] the user if the user contacts the data center after the expiration date attempting to obtain postage for the business reply mail piece.
15. (Amended) A memory device accessible by a computing system, the memory device comprising:
a plurality of mail campaign sender accounts associated with respective mail campaign senders, where each of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts includes a registration ID number associated with a delivery address and a particular mail campaign of which a business replay mail piece is a part, respectively.
16. (Amended) The memory device of claim 15, [comprising] wherein:
at least one of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts further includes an indication associated with the registration ID number to determine whether or not the respective mail campaign sender authorizes a subsidy

to a user for mailing the business reply mail piece [if the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period exists].

17. (Amended) The memory device of claim 16, [comprising] wherein:
at least one of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts further includes
an expiration date, beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer
wanted by the mail campaign sender, associated with the registration ID
number to determine whether or not to provide a warning to the user.
18. (Amended) The memory device of claim 15, [comprising] wherein:
at least one of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts further includes
an expiration date, beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer
wanted by the mail campaign sender, associated with the registration ID
number to determine whether or not to provide a warning to the user.
19. (Amended) A business reply mail piece, comprising:
a registration ID number printed thereon and wherein the registration ID
number is associated with a mail campaign sender, a previously defined
delivery address and a particular mail campaign of which the business
[replay] reply mail piece is a part.

Please add the following new claims:

20. The business reply mail piece of claim 19, wherein:
the registration ID number and the previously defined delivery address are
printed thereon.
21. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving the subsidy only if the business reply mail piece is posted within a
specified time period defined by the mail campaign sender.

22. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving a subsidy provided by the data center to the user of the postage metering system for mailing the business reply mail piece.
23. The method of claim 22, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving the subsidy only if the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period defined by the mail campaign sender.
24. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step(s) of:
displaying a warning to the user if the user contacts the data center after an expiration date, defined by the mail campaign sender, beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender, attempting to obtain postage for the business reply mail piece, where the expiration date is associated with the registration ID number.
25. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing a subsidy to the user for mailing the business reply mail piece; and charging the subsidy to the mail campaign sender.
26. The method of claim 25, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing the subsidy only if the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period defined by the mail campaign sender.
27. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving an expiration date from the mail campaign sender, beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender, that is associated with the registration ID number; and providing a warning to the user if the user contacts the data center after the expiration date attempting to obtain postage for the business reply mail piece.

28. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step(s) of:
storing a plurality of delivery addresses previously defined by the mail campaign sender; and
selecting the delivery address for the business reply mail piece from the plurality of delivery addresses according to parameters, previously established by the mail campaign sender, associated with the user of the postage metering system.
29. The method of claim 6, further comprising the step(s) of:
storing a plurality of delivery addresses previously defined by the mail campaign sender; and
selecting the delivery address for the business reply mail piece from the plurality of delivery addresses according to parameters, previously established by the mail campaign sender, associated with the user of the postage metering system.
30. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing a notification to the mail campaign sender when business reply mail piece is posted by the user.
31. The method of claim 6, further comprising the step(s) of:
providing a notification to the mail campaign sender when the business reply mail piece is posted by the user.
32. The method of claim 12, further comprising the step(s) of:
specifying a time period in which the business reply mail piece must be posted to receive the subsidy; and
authorizing the data center to charge the subsidy to the mail campaign sender only if the business reply mail piece is posted within the specified time period.

33. The method of claim 9, further comprising the step(s) of:
specifying an expiration date beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender; and
authorizing the data center to provide a warning to the user if the user contacts the data center after the expiration date attempting to obtain postage for the business reply mail piece.
34. The method of claim 9, further comprising the step(s) of:
defining a plurality of delivery addresses; and
establishing parameters for use in determining a selected one of the plurality of delivery address to use as the delivery address on the business reply mail piece, where the parameters are associated with the user of the postage metering system.
35. The memory device of claim 15, wherein:
some of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts further include an expiration date beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender.
36. The memory device of claim 15, wherein:
some of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts further include: (i) a plurality of delivery addresses; and (ii) parameters for use in determining a selected one of the plurality of delivery address to use as the delivery address on the business reply mail piece, where the parameters are associated with the user of the postage metering system.
37. The memory device of claim 17, wherein:
some of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts further include an expiration date beyond which the business reply mail piece is no longer wanted by the mail campaign sender.

38. The memory device of claim 17, wherein:
some of the plurality of mail campaign sender accounts further include: (i) a plurality of delivery addresses; and (ii) parameters for use in determining a selected one of the plurality of delivery address to use as the delivery address on the business reply mail piece, where the parameters are associated with the user of the postage metering system.
39. The method of claim 4, further comprising the step(s) of:
sending a message to the mail campaign sender indicating that the user has dispatched the business reply mail piece.
40. The method of claim 7, further comprising the step(s) of:
sending a message to the mail campaign sender indicating that the user has dispatched the business reply mail piece.
41. The method of claim 26, further comprising the step(s) of:
sending a message to the mail campaign sender indicating that the user has dispatched the business reply mail piece.
42. The method of claim 9, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving a message from the data center indicating that the user has dispatched the business reply mail piece.
43. The method of claim 14, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving a message from the data center indicating that the user has dispatched the business reply mail piece.
44. The method of claim 33, further comprising the step(s) of:
receiving a message from the data center indicating that the user has dispatched the business reply mail piece.--